

Amendment would help protect America's financial sector from cyber attacks, promote the study of cybersecurity insurance

WASHINGTON, D.C. - An amendment sponsored by Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (CA-47) was adopted today by voice vote in the House Homeland Security Committee during a markup of H.R. 4842, the Homeland Security Science and Technology Authorization Act of 2010. Rep. Sanchez's amendment would help ensure our financial sector continues to be operational in the event of a cyber attack.

"Right now, we have no idea how our financial sector would be affected by a significant cyber attack," said Rep. Sanchez, who is Vice Chair of the Committee. "What happens if a sophisticated hacker is able to target the electronic data of our financial systems, our banks, or even the New York Stock Exchange? My amendment would help ensure that our financial institutions, and the invaluable data they store electronically, are adequately secured."

Rep. Sanchez's amendment would also promote the study of cybersecurity insurance – a relatively unknown concept which, in theory, would protect organizations in the public and private sector from losses associated with cyber attacks (such as theft of electronic data, computer viruses, denial of service attacks, and other security breaches).

"Protecting our public and private computer networks from cyber attacks is one of *the* most important security challenges we currently face," continue Rep. Sanchez. "In theory, cybersecurity insurance could be an incredible resource to help organizations cover the potential losses associated with electronic theft or sabotage. Unfortunately, we haven't fully explored the pros and cons of the cybersecurity insurance market. My amendment would simply encourage our agencies to do their homework and research this type of coverage so we know whether it's an asset."

H.R. 4842 has been referred to the full House Homeland Security Committee for further consideration.

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